

I support media diversity

Dear FCC Regulators:

There are words written below that come from someone else. I concur with them heartily. However in this moment I want to tell you myself that the proposed changes you are on the verge of making can only be harmful to our democratic institutions. These changes are about benefiting a very wealthy and very powerful few. The supposed 'advantages' to the public are spurious and unimportant at best. What really matters to us all is a rich, diverse, independent fourth estate.

And we're on the verge of losing that.

There are people today who 'know' that they are 'right'. And they think they ought to be able to tell everybody else what they need to think and do, because any contrary thinking must, by its very nature, be 'wrong'.

This is the beginning of the road to facism.

Further concentration of the media, where it can more and more be used and controlled by the central government, is a very large step in that direction.

You need to think long and hard about what you are apparently getting ready to do. You need to be thinking about preserving democracy for your children and grandchildren.

Because the alternative is terrible indeed. Tyrants ALWAYS think they are RIGHT. And those who KNOW they are RIGHT, as they gather more and more power unto themselves, eventually DO become tyrants.

Is that what you really want to happen?

Now for those other words:

'I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.'

Thank you,

Ginny Howard